

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 002726

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/UBI, EUR/RPM, PM/RSAT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/28/2013

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [KPKO](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NL](#) [LI](#) [AF](#) [IZ](#) [BK](#)

SUBJECT: STATUS OF DUTCH MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS: LIBERIA,
AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ AND BOSNIA

REF: A. THE HAGUE 2299 (NOTAL)

[B](#). THE HAGUE 2343 (NOTAL)

[C](#). STATE 302820 (NOTAL)

[D](#). STATE 283779 (NOTAL)

Classified By: CLASSIFIED BY ACTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR NATHANIEL DEAN
FOR REASONS 1.5 (B AND D).

[1](#)1. (S) Summary: Acting PolCouns met with the Dutch MFA Security Policy Bureau Operations Chief Rob Gabrielse (protect throughout) on October 29 to review the status of current and planned Dutch participation in international military operations in Liberia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Bosnia.

On Liberia, Gabrielse confirmed that the GONL planned to dispatch the Dutch Navy's Landing Platform, Dock (LPD) Hr.Ms. Rotterdam to participate in UN operations in Liberia (UNMIL).

Gabrielse said the GONL continues to consider possible further involvement on the ground in Afghanistan, to include potential deployment of special operations force (SOF) in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), takeover of operations at Kabul International Airport or participation in the German-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) at Konduz. The GONL believes its deployment to Al Muthanna province in Iraq as part of the UK division has been successful to date, and anticipates approval of a six-month extension of the deployment in November. Acting PolCouns conveyed previously requested information concerning a U.S. request for deployment of Dutch Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) assets in Iraq. On Bosnia, Gabrielse said while the Dutch support an eventual EU takeover of the NATO SFOR mission, they have no plans to reduce their forces out of step with allies, believe any EU takeover must be done in line with full NATO-EU consultations. End Summary.

Liberia

[1](#)2. (C) Gabrielse confirmed that the GONL had decided on October 24 to deploy the Dutch Navy's LPD, Hr.Ms. Rotterdam for three months in support of UNMIL. The Rotterdam includes hospital and water purification facilities, a platoon of marines for security and two Lynx helicopters. The Rotterdam is expected to arrive off Liberia in mid-November and will transport goods, vehicles and, if necessary, troops from Monrovia to Buchanan and Harper, as well as supplying drinking water to UN staff and personnel. The Dutch parliament will review the deployment during the week of November 3. Gabrielse anticipated no significant parliamentary problems in view of the support of the main opposition Labor party for the deployment. The second-largest coalition partner, the Liberals, have expressed skepticism about the mission owing to perceived lack of involvement from other major western countries and possible overstretch of Dutch forces. Comment: Post shares Gabrielse's view that the deployment will go forward as planned. End Comment.

Afghanistan

[1](#)3. (C) The GONL continues to review options for a possible on the ground Dutch presence in Afghanistan. Following the conclusion of their co-lead role of ISAF III with Germany on August 11, the Dutch have maintained a residual presence of 35 personnel in the ISAF IV Headquarters. The Dutch Air Force concluded its F-16 deployment with the European Participating Air Force (EPAF) detachment flying out of Manas, Kyrgyzstan in support of OEF on October 1. Gabrielse said there is still a high level of determination in MFA to do more on the ground in Afghanistan. Defense Minister Kamp, who has had to cope with severe budget cutbacks, has been more skeptical. Gabrielse outlined three possible options: the Dutch would deploy a small contingent of SOF in support of OEF, the Dutch would take over operation of Kabul International Airport or the Dutch would deploy personnel with the German-led PRT at Konduz. The Dutch government has been reviewing possible deployment of SOF in support of OEF for more than a year. As reported ref B, the military is enthusiastic about such a deployment, but the leadership of MOD and MFA are concerned about potential domestic political ramifications of Dutch SOF apprehending Taliban/Al Qaeda

members that may then be detained at Guantanamo Bay. Regarding Kabul Airport, Gabrielse noted this was a request from NATO and said that since no ally had taken it up to date, the Dutch might take over the mission. That said, MOD had warned MFA that experts necessary for this mission might not be quickly available. Dutch participation in the German-led PRT at Konduz has until recently been the preferred political option for Ministers, though there are strong arguments in support of the former two possibilities. Gabrielse expected some sort of decision on further Dutch involvement in Afghanistan in November.

Iraq

14. (S) To date, the GONL believes its deployment of 1100 personnel (mostly Dutch marines) to Al Muthanna Province as part of the UK division conducting stabilization operations has gone well. Hostile incidents have been few, and the Dutch have conducted successful operations to seize weapons such as a recent episode where Dutch marines and military police concealed in local taxis disrupted a weapons selling operation in As Samawah, which resulted in the arrest of 82 individuals. The leadership of the Dutch parliament's foreign policy and defense committees is presently on a visit to the Dutch sector in Iraq. Gabrielse anticipated the GONL would take a decision extending the deployment of the Dutch contingent by six months after the parliamentarians return. Gabrielse said that the GONL is in active discussions with the Japanese government (GOJ) about the possible deployment of Ground Self Defense Forces (GSDF) personnel to the Dutch sector. Gabrielse said a GOJ survey team had a successful visit to the Dutch sector in September and he expected a GOJ decision in November on the deployment. Acting PolCouns conveyed background information as provided ref C on Explosive Ordnance Disposal further to U.S. request for deployment of Dutch EOD assets to Al Muthanna (ref D). Gabrielse expressed appreciation for the additional information, but made no additional comment about possible a Dutch EOD deployment.

Bosnia

15. (SBU) Concerning Bosnia, the other major Dutch overseas deployment (the Dutch have 1100 troops serving in SFOR) Gabrielse said the Dutch had no plans to reduce forces out of step with other allies. The GONL favors an eventual takeover of the SFOR mission by the EU, but believes this should depend on developments on the ground, the position of the Bosnian government and extensive NATO-EU discussions. SOBEL